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State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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July 2, 2009

TO: EMS Service Directors

FROM: Brian Litza, Section Chief
LeeAnn Cooper, License Manager
Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Section

SUBJECT: New EMS license system information

The EMS section is pleased to announce that a new license system is being implemented that we believe will result in some significant improvements in our licensing process. **Wisconsin EMS E-licensing** is an online application and licensing system that is electronic using secure web technology. We want to share with you our plan and time-line for implementing *E-licensing* and to inform you about changes that will occur in our process. We are on a tight time-line and will do our best to stay on task but that means we will need your timely assistance!

E-licensing will allow the EMS section to issue one (1) EMS provider license to an individual at his/her highest eligible level. There will be no more need for EMS providers to hold multiple licenses when affiliated with more than one service! Once licensed by the State of Wisconsin, the EMS provider may then present his/her license to a service for local credentialing. "Credentialing" is a term being used nationally. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), National EMS Scope of Practice Model states that "*credentialing is a local process by which an individual is permitted by a specific entity (medical director) to practice in a specific setting (EMS agency).*" *E-licensing* will assure that an individual requesting local credentialing with your service is properly licensed as an EMS provider in the State of Wisconsin. Individuals may not, of course, practice above the level of the service regardless of his or her license level. Credentialing through a service will be done electronically and service rosters will be maintained through the Wisconsin Ambulance Run Data System (WARDS). In order to accomplish this, all services must have an active account in WARDS.

Action required: If your service does not have an account in WARDS, you should find an additional account letter in this mailing. Please complete and return the enclosed form as soon as possible. It may be faxed to 608-261-6392, scanned and e-mailed to Nora Stofflet or Charles Happel, or sent USPS.

Once an EMS provider is licensed, he/she may then request local credentialing with a service through *E-licensing*. The credential process begins when the individual logs into his/her *E-licensing* account and completes a credential application selecting the service that he/she wishes to be credentialed with. *E-licensing* then automatically notifies the service director by email that an individual is requesting local credentialing with your service. Once the service director approves the individual electronically, a message will be sent to the service's medical director who will log into *E-licensing* to grant MD authorization. Once the MD authorizes the

individual, *E-licensing* will allow the individual to be added to the service roster in WARDS. Credentialing will be required under the following conditions:

1. The first time an EMS provider joins your service
2. The individual leaves your service but wants to rejoin it at some point in the future
3. The service medical director takes action to remove MD authorization

There will be no more approving and re-authorizing each individual on your roster every biennium!

Action required: If you have an account in WARDS or as soon as you set up an account in WARDS, please designate the service director ("Operations Manager") and Medical Director. These are the individuals who are authorized to credential individuals to practice on your service. It is imperative that their email addresses be current in WARDS to receive these auto messages.

We anticipate that EMSS, our current license database, will no longer be available to you on or about July 15, 2009. After that date, all external users will lose access to EMSS. EMS office staff will continue to process applications received through July 15, 2009. On July 16, 2009, the EMS office staff will begin to return paper applications to the applicant with instructions for completing an application online using *E-licensing*.

After July 16, 2009, EMS provider initial license applications will only be accepted electronically. The online application will be available on August 3, 2009.

Licensing data in EMSS will be migrated into *E-licensing*.

Action required: Please update all addresses, phone numbers and email addresses for the service, the service director, the medical director and all EMS providers on your roster in EMSS prior to July 15, 2009. Please update CPR and ACLS for individuals, as well. This will ensure the most current and correct information is migrated to *E-licensing*. This contact data will be used to send information about their personal accounts to all EMS providers in the very near future.

Once licensing data is moved into *E-licensing*, individuals who hold a license will already have an account in *E-licensing*. Those individuals who have a logon and password in WARDS will use the same logon and password to access their licensing record in *E-licensing*. For those individuals who do not have a WARDS account, we will be mailing letters to them on or about July 30, 2009, with personal account information. This information will require each individual to log into his/her account in *E-licensing* and to change the password. ***E-licensing allows only 1 individual to have the same email address.*** All e-mail addresses must be unique to the person and shared with no one else. This will improve security by ensuring that only the individual can access the account and personally identifiable information is protected. In addition, it is critical that the email address be an individual's personal email account. *E-licensing* has a built-in messaging function that allows us to communicate directly to a license holder. In addition, should an individual forget his/her password, a personal email account is necessary to recover the password.

Action required: Please update EMSS with current personal email accounts for individuals on your roster on or before July 15, 2009.

Beginning next spring, license holders will be using *E-licensing* to renew their licenses. This will require an individual to log into his/her account and complete the renewal application. The service will no longer be responsible for renewing individual EMS provider licenses or signing off every 2 years. You will simply monitor your roster in WARDS to assure that individuals on your roster renewed prior to June 30, 2010.

No action required! Monitor roster on WARDS.

EMS providers who hold a valid license will receive a letter providing them with their logon and a randomly generated password needed to access their *E-licensing* account. This information will be mailed to them after the data migration has occurred later this month.

Since service directors will no longer have access to EMSS, please utilize WARDS to maintain information such as vehicles, service director, medical director, mutual aid services, etc. Although all EMSS functionality may not be available in WARDS, many of the service details may be maintained in WARDS.

Action required: Please update all service information in WARDS, including your vehicles, mutual aid services, the name of your service director and medical director.

WARDS includes a training component that allows services to maintain continuing education for individuals on the roster. If your service is providing continuing education to your members, we recommend that you maintain training in WARDS. Individuals who complete continuing education hours will be required to verify it at the time of license renewal. A printout of the training from WARDS for each individual would assist them in the renewal process.

Action requested: maintain continuing education offered through your service in WARDS.

Service applications will be available electronically using *E-licensing*. Updating operational plans and protocols will be done electronically in the near future. More detail will follow once this process is set up. Again, it is critical that services have a current email addresses in WARDS so that the EMS office can make use of the messaging features of WARDS and *E-Licensing* which will improve our ability to effectively communicate with you.

Action required: Please make certain that WARDS has a current service and/or service director email address.

Electronic credentialing is a growing trend. We believe this new system will greatly improve the efficiency of our licensing process. We are not expecting this migration to go without challenges. Please do not hesitate to contact either LeeAnn Cooper, Licensing Manager, at 608-267-9777 or via email at leeann.cooper@wisconsin.gov or Brian Litza, EMS Section Chief, at 608-261-6870 or via email at brian.litza@wisconsin.gov with any questions or concerns.

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Date: July 2, 2009
To: EMS Service Directors
From: EMS Section

The Wisconsin EMS office is pleased to announce the implementation of a new EMS license system. The intent is that initial issuance and renewal of licenses will be accomplished online thus reducing processing time and eliminating 90% of the paper we receive. In the future, the State office will begin issuing a single nonaffiliated license to individuals at their highest eligible level. These licenses will then allow service directors and medical directors to electronically authorize and credential individuals on their roster. This will allow the individual to be added to the service roster and assure that they are properly licensed and credentialed to practice.

To accomplish this, the Wisconsin Ambulance Run Data System (WARDS) will be used for credentialing purposes and roster maintenance. What this means to you is that all services will now be required to have an account and to maintain their rosters within WARDS instead of EMSS. EMSS access to all will be removed in the very near future so it is important that you respond to this request.

This letter is being sent to you because our records show that you do not yet have an account set up in WARDS. To get your service set up, we need the following information:

Service Name: _____

Service Director Name: _____

Service mailing address: _____

Service City, State, Zip: _____

Service email address: _____

Service phone number: _____

Logon: (1st choice) _____ Logon: (2nd choice) _____
(If the logon is available, we will set you up with your first choice)

We will follow-up via e-mail once your form is received with further instructions. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Chuck Happel at (608) 266-0471 or via email at charles.happel@wisconsin.gov.